



BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL
RYAN DORSEY, 3rd District

100 Holliday Street
Room 523
Baltimore, MD 21202
Office: 410-396-4812
Ryan.Dorsey@BaltimoreCity.gov

Monday, November 26, 2018

Mayor Catherine Pugh
Office of the Mayor
100 Holliday St., Rm 250
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Mayor Pugh,

It is impossible to overstate the importance of the position of Police Commissioner. During a time of spiraling violence, we have had four Commissioners in five years. I take my confirmation vote very seriously, as my constituents in the 3rd District expect. This letter is intended to outline my expectations related to confirming the next Police Commissioner for the Baltimore City Police Department.

Many of my colleagues on the City Council share my concerns regarding the level of communication and transparency to the City Council from past Commissioners. There have been verbal promises of improvement from past commissioners that never materialized. Past Commissioners have been resistant to providing forthright and transparent answers in hearings before the City Council. This posture from Commissioners has at times bordered on adversarial, whereas most citizens expect Councilmembers to have a relationship of partnership and collaboration with the Police Commissioner.

These communications and transparency issues have been accompanied by a near constant stream of scandals and reports of rancor and disarray from within the Department itself. Collaboration and partnership with the City Council is of utmost importance, especially considering the high level of turnover at the position of District Commander (the Northeast District is on its fifth District Commander since I took office in December of 2016.)

Confirming the next Police Commissioner begins with conducting an excellent selection process that produces better results than the last three. My support for the nominee is contingent on the following factors:

- The nominee will provide me access to his personnel files from his last four places of employment: Philadelphia, PA; Missouri City, TX; Allentown, PA; Fort Worth, TX.
- The nominee will grant me access to any information, reports, and communications gathered by the City of Baltimore in its search for and selection of the candidate, and all such communications will be provided to me by the Mayor's Office.
- The Mayor's Office and the nominee will provide me with a clarification of the expected level of partnership and collaboration between the Police Commissioner and the City Council (the job description omitted any mention of this).
- The nominee will meet privately with me for a minimum of two hours prior to a 2nd Reader vote on his confirmation.
- The Mayor's Office will provide a written statement of what its definition of a successful tenure for the next Police Commissioner is, including grounds for termination or extension of the Police Commissioner's contract, and what it anticipates the length of tenure for the Commissioner will be.

Via the Executive Nominations committee hearing process and our private meetings, I expect to hear a plan to overcome the communication problems and other issues enumerated above, as well as the nominee's perspective on substantive matters including the following:

- What is the nominee's perspective on how police resources should be allocated to non-violent drug offenses (i.e., the War on Drugs) or low-level nuisance offenses (i.e., Broken Windows policing), and how will this inform his leadership of the Department?
- Does the nominee support greater local control of the Police Department? The creation of a board of commissioners to oversee the department? Reforms to Maryland's Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights? How would the nominee plan to testify on these or other reform measures before the Maryland General Assembly? Are there any other topics which can



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be addressed either legislatively or administratively on which the nominee intends to lobby the General Assembly, the Governor, or counterparts in other jurisdictions for support?

- What is the nominee's perspective on waste and fraud within the Department, particularly as it relates to overtime expenses? As the Commissioner is one of many stewards of the City's broad interests, will the Commissioner commit to cutting waste and fraud within the Department in order to ease the strain of the Department on the City budget? How, specifically?
- What is the nominee's perspective on the causes of the Baltimore Uprising?
- What is the nominee's perspective on the "blue wall of silence", including how this is similar to "stop snitching"? Does the Department's ability or lack thereof to address the "blue wall of silence" have any bearing on its ability to confront "stop snitching" culture?
- For a Department that is widely thought to be in need a fresh start, how will the nominee act immediately in the short-term to make change? Does he anticipate resistance to his efforts? How does he plan to overcome such resistance? How will he define success and measure progress?
- Having never run a Department as large or as challenging as Baltimore's, what makes the nominee qualified to run the Baltimore Police Department? What makes the nominee the best possible candidate for this job at this time?
- Is the nominee committed to remaining in the position of Commissioner for as long as it takes to achieve success?

I look forward to thorough confirmation process.

Sincerely,

Ryan Dorsey
Baltimore City Council, Third District

cc Council President Young, Nominee Joel Fitzgerald